

Reflection on Language Arts lesson

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I had originally planned, with my mentoring teacher, to do this lesson on Tuesday of this week. The class finished working on conjunctions last week, and my mentor was starting a unit on compound words this week. The weekly spelling list contained all compound words. I used those spelling words for my lesson activity. My mentor was absent on Monday, and because there were no lesson plans to complete with the students that day, I went ahead and started my compound word lesson. We reviewed all spelling words, and talked about what a compound word is. My activity was that students would separate into two groups, each person in each group would hold a card up which had a portion of a compound word on it (spelling words). I split the words up so that the opposing team would have the opposite half of each word. I had the students count off by twos and passed out the cards. The two teams stood about six feet apart and faced each other with their words showing. I asked the students to look at their word and find the person with the word that matched theirs in creating a compound word. The students found each other and stood in groups of two. I asked the pairs to sit together and come up with two sentences each for their compound word. Students then shared some of their sentences.

The following day, Tuesday, we completed the lesson. We played an online game, as a class, where students were showed four pictures and asked to place two pictures into the blender to form a compound word with the objects name. The students enjoyed this activity. Some of the compound words were unfamiliar words. Some of the objects were difficult to indentify. Overall I think the students got some good practice out of the activity, but I don't think I would use this particular game again. I would try to find one that contained more familiar compound words and images. The next part of the lesson was to complete a worksheet, for formal assessment, that had many different compound words on it. The students did well, and I think it helped them with understanding of the concept.

The teacher returned to school yesterday, Wednesday, and performed her own formal assessment on compound words. Students were asked to chose a word from two different boxes and make a compound word for each. This proved difficult not only for the students, but for the teacher and I as well. Some of the words had more than one match on the other side and others had no matching word in the other box. These words were most definitely unfamiliar. The teacher decided not to use this as an assessment grade.

Yesterday afternoon I worked with the teacher on making a spelling list for next week that contains unfamiliar compound words. We included words such as, footprints, ballfield(which according to spell check, this is not a word, but the teacher provided assessment stated the it was...I think I will mention that to the teacher), and bathrobe. The students have been picking compound words out of books during their reading workshop time. I think the students understand what a compound word is, but the unfamiliar words have really tripped them up. I even heard some kids coming up with words that are not words, because they are not advanced or familiar enough with vocabulary to recognize a vast amount of words in the English vocabulary. Some kids have never heard of a bathrobe. We don't call our robes bathrobes at home, so I doubt my children would know that one either. This is an ongoing unit, and it will take time for the students to build vocabulary.